Govt's case withdrawal

7 dead, scores hurt Police raid

Israeli troops sealed off Bethlehem soon after the attack.

Palestinian groups have killed 867 Israelis in attacks during more than three years of conflict. At least 2,350 Palestinians have been killed since the uprising for statehood began in 2000.

A Palestinian suicide bomber last struck in Jerusalem on January 29, killing 11 people on a number 19 bus. Israel has sent the wreckage of that vehicle to The Hague as part of its public relations offensive for the World

Court hearings.
About 180 km (110 miles) of the planned 730 km (435 miles) West Bank barrier has been built.

Minutes before the blast, Israeli work crews began tearing down an eight km-long (five-mile) section of the barrier that separated a Palestinian village from the rest of the West Bank. Construction continues elsewhere including near Jerusalem.

Palestinians call the barrier an attempt to seal a hold on land Israel has occupied since the 1967 Middle

The Hague court will issue a nonbinding opinion on the barrier at the

Speaker bans

whip and demanded of the speaker to give a ruling on the matter.

Treasury bench lawmakers including the Leader of the House Khaleda Zia thumped desks to back his demand.

Accepting the point of order, the speaker ruled that the law clearly bars holding of such programmes in the precincts of the House and the precincts, according to the rules of procedure, mean and include the chamber, the lobby, the galleries and such other places as the Speaker may from time to time

request of the United Nations. Israel has made a written submission, but will not attend the proceedings, leaving campaigners to put its case outside

Relatives of suicide bombing victims, who flew to the Netherlands to defend the barrier, confronted Israeli Arab lawmakers who were there to support the Palestinian case.

GK Project

discussed in the meeting and the minister has assured us of poring over the report to arrive at a decision, committee Chairman MAMatin said.

Ivara International deserved the contract for the renovations to the pumps, installed by a Japanese firm 1957 to take water to 1,97,500

About Tk 48 crore would have been wasted if the contract was given to Kenematsu, another Japanese firm through the re-tender, it said, adding, the process would take another two years to implement the

bers at the meeting alleged that the re-tender decision was taken because of bureaucratic tangles and favoured awarding the contract to Ivara, sources said

man, the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban was attended by committee members and officials

'My sorrows all for you'

"I will accept what Allah wills. "I have no regret about my own life. My sorrows all for you. I could not do anything." Hasan Mahbub Bablu. abducted at gunpoint on February 2 from Ri Gri Khong, the restaurant of Hillside Resort, wrote Shandhi, an

get upset. This is my last request to you," said 40-year-old Bablu in his first letter after abduction, who also wrote his elder brother Hassan Mahmud

Bablu, a broken man in captivity, is losing hope for the better, the letter to Khokon says in a sharp contrast to uninterrupted operation of the hillside resort hotel without its co-owner.

The hotelier is said to have appealed for a quick rescue through paying the demanded ransom rather than seeking military help to find him

The letter put a question mark over the mysterious behaviour of Bablu's relatives, conflicting information and repeated assurance from the govern-

ment of rescue. Bablu's relatives earlier said he would be rescued on the their own and they were ready to pay as much

ransom as demanded.

Sources said the

The abduction underlined security fears in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), often rocked by waves of violence between the pro-peace pact Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity and its rival United People's Democratic Front in the wake of the 1997 agreement that ended two

Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin. State Minister for Environment and the abduction.

Mustak arrived in Bandarban yesterday on a three-day visit and police set up three camps, while army mounted

1996 and the ransom-motivated kidnap of Chittagong businessman Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury on

undertaken efficiently," it said. On April 12, 2003, the Cabinet committee decided.

would take necessary decisions considering the realities of the SOEs and ask the PC to either sell them or deal with them through "other

The SOE privatisation process stumbled again on December 27 last vear when the cabinet committee decided to revert to its April 12 decision, namely non-interference of the

Khaleda seeks

FROM PAGE 12

Patel, who visited Bangladesh in August last year, appreciated the progress Bangladesh made in socioeconomic fields. He thanked the prime minister for Bangladesh's success in microcredit programme, empowerment of women, reduction in the number of the poor and holding the Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Microcredit in Dhaka.

During the meeting, the delegation informed the prime minister about a recent publication of the WB titled Economic and Social Progress of Bangladesh, which said Bangladesh has achieved gender parity in enrolment at primary and secondary levels, while it has the highest density of private universities

in the region. It said infant mortality in the country has been reduced by half, adding that population growth has been reduced at an unprecedented speed in recorded history with the current rate of 1.5 percent.

It also mentioned Bangladesh's success in involving 12-million women in microcredit, maintaining healthy labour relations, reducing poverty and malnutrition, increasing per capita income, increasing remittances and integrating private entrepreneurs in new sectors like cellular phone, airport and power generation.

FROM PAGE 12

"The sub-committee report was

The sub-committee observed that

The irrigation pumps are in very bad shape and collapse of any running pump would hamper cereal production in the project area.

Most standing committee mem-

Chaired by the committee chair-

"Study hard for your exams. Don't

decades of bush war. State Minister for Aviation and

CHT Affairs Secretary Syed

The hotelier's life in captivity is reminiscent of abduction of Upazila Chairman Ka Shai Thowai Master in

PC in liquidation of SOEs by minis-

seeking final approval from Prime

Till vesterday, the Prime Minister's

Ministry of Textiles, no other minis-

tries have any liquidation cell to

Minister Khaleda Zia on this decision

Now the Cabinet Committee is

On the other hand, except for the

Finance Minister Saifur Rahman

SOE sell-off through

Office did not clear it.

privatise SOEs

Committee on Economic Affairs decided that the SOEs which have loans and liabilities but do not have any operating cost would be liquidated through existing liquidation cells of the ministries concerned. The PC would not interfere in this process and withdraw the names of these SOEs from its privatisation list, the

December tried to justify the Again on June 7, 2003, the cabiinvolvement of ministries by saying net committee slightly modified its earlier position, saying the ministries they were in a better position to clear bank liabilities of SOEs. However, sources alleged that the

real reason for involving the ministries was to render the privatisation process non-transparent to politicise it so that the SOFs could be sold off at throwaway prices to individuals handpicked by the government instead of competent entrepreneurs.

JS body

diverted from the road maintenance fund and questioned its burst of wasteful roadworks in monsoon.

"It is unacceptable that the communications ministry could not take up a single project eight months into the current fiscal year," committee Chairman MAkbar Ali, who chaired the

If the activities were started, they could be completed in the stipulated time, he said, adding all committee members including Saifur were highly annoyed at the procrastination of R&H Department officials that usually linger project implementation.

"Implementation of projects in monsoon is a murky practice of the R&H Department. Rain washes away materials ruining the quality of work, said GM Fazlul Haq, a committee member, alleging moneymaking

Akbar told the meeting that a road connecting Ullahpara, Punimagati and Tarash in his Sirajganj constituency was finalised in last November, but work on the project was yet to begin.

He said the R&H officials did not consult with him about the roadworks in a breach of their responsibility.

Committee members Kazi Anwar Hossain, Dr Ziaul Hag Mollah, Sarwar Jamal Nizam. Md Hafiz Ibrahim and Maulana Abdul Aziz attended the meeting, among others

JP-E leader's Khulna house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna police yesterday raided the residence of Khulna city president of Jatiya Party (Ershad).

However, JP-E leader Shaikh Abul Hossain, a former MP, was out of his Sher-e-Bangla Road house during the raid, sources said.

A police team went to the JP-E leader's house at about 11:00am apparently to arrest Asaduzzaman Litu, a former Khulna city ward commissioner and Abul's uncle, they added.

Law enforcers have been searching for Litu, the prime accused in Janakantha journalist Shamsur Rahman murder case, for the last couple of days, locals said. Protesting the police raid, the JP-E brought out a procession in the city in the afternoon.

Youth killed at Kafrul, 'criminal' dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Assailants gunned down a youth in Kafrul Saturday, while a Sutrapur criminal suffering bullet injuries Tuesday died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Police said Asgar, an acquaintance of the victim Mintu, 28, of Lalsharai in Jamalkot, phoned and asked him to go to Jamalkot pond at around 6:45pm. As soon as Mintu arrived at the

spot, five miscreants opened fire on him. Locals rushed him to the DMCH with three bullet injuries in his chest and head where the doctors declared him dead Ali Ahmad, the victim's father, told

The Daily Starthat killers of his another son, Osman Ahmed, who was shot dead in the locality on April 20 last year, might have killed Mintu. As Mintu was the plaintiff of Osman murder case, the killers might have

could not give any details about the Mintu's elder brother M Shahabuddin filed a case with Kafrul

avenged by killing him, Ali said, but

Police arrested one Ruku from Matikata in Cantonment Saturday night in this connection and produced him before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate with a sevenday remand petition yesterday.

Police Station.

Earlier on Tuesday, a gang of about 15 sprayed bullets on Amir Hossain Babu alias Kana Babu and his brother Mohamamad Loton near their house at Shashimohan Basak Lane in Sutrapur at around 2:30pm and left Loton dead on the spot.

Kana Babu received three bullets n his right thigh, stomach and left shoulder and was admitted to the DMCH where he succumbed to his iniuries vesterdav.

Sutrapur police said he was accused in nine cases including two

AC Akram

Raising public criticism in November last year, a High Court bench granted Akram three months bail, which expired on February 17. Following a government petition, the SC staved the ex-AC's bail but Akram got out of iail before it was passed.

On February 11, the SC ordered Akram to surrender within a week.

Akram and his 11 subordinates of Detective Branch of police were sentenced to life imprisonment for torturing to death Rubel at Siddheswari in the capital in July 1998.

AJ Mohammad Ali, additional attorney general, told the news agency that law enforcers should mmediately arrest the much talked about police official and put him

India's run

defeat at the hands of the West Indies.

India bit the dust in a day-night

Chasing a fighting South African total of 226-5 in 50 overs, Robin Singh's boys were out for 223 in 47.1 overs. The victory was a tremendous boost for the young Proteas after an unimpressive first phase where they conceded a shock one-wicket defeat

against minnows Nepal. Sri Lanka might have scraped through to the Cup competition at the expense of defending champions Australia, but the islanders failed to copple a modest West Indian total of 200 despite an exciting 93-run eighth wicket stand between Kulasekara and

chase for a consolation Plate honour in emphatic style defeating Scotland by 10 wickets at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong.

The defending champions bowled the Scots out for 22, the lowest score in the competition so far, and then rattled up the required 23 in 3.5 overs. There were as many as six ducks in the Scotland innings with the highest score 10 coming from extras.

Nepal however continued to mpress in the meet when they hrashed Papua New Guinea by 7 wickets at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium in the other Plate Championship match.

HR state key

FROM PAGE 1 delegates, including lawmakers from ruling and opposition benches of Bundestag, who arrived in Dhaka on February 18 on a five-day visit from Nepal. They were scheduled to visit Colombo but cancelled the trip followng dissolution of the Sri Lankan

The delegates met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, cabinet members and business. media and civil society

On a question of political repression, Pflug said: "I don't want to engage in the debate of political repression but killings, rapes and tortures definitely qualify as humanrights violations.

minister too. We had to regret in all these talks that opposition does not go to parliament. We're not here to lecture or teach you. I can say that in Germany we all -- government and opposition parties -- contribute together in making

Tangail MP mugged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers snatched cash and valuables reportedly worth Tk 1,200 from an Awami League lawmaker yesterday near Shantinagar cross-

Three youths from an adjacent rickshaw bade salam to Ekabbar Hossain, an MP of Tangail-Mirzapur constituency, when he was going to his friend's Bijoynagar residence on a rickshaw at about 3:30pm. Taking them as residents from his constituency, he greeted them in reply and then the trio jumped forward and stopped his rickshaw, Ekabbar said.

Surprised, he showed his identity card to the muggers but they seemed indifferent and took away his cash and valuables at gunpoint,

However, Motijheel police said they received no complaint and no case was lodged

Bangladeshi flag

FROM PAGE 12 excessive compared to prevailing market price, and so the contract

was cancelled straint. "We wrote to the Bangladesh embassy in the Netherlands to appoint an attorney to represent us in the case: but it was not possible due to too tight a

The Dutch court delivered the verdict without representation of

Bangladesh government. Meanwhile, the education ministry has failed to initiate an inter-ministerial

from the education ministry or the national exchequer. In December 2000, the

provide about Tk 49.95 crore as grant for introducing computer courses in 3,382 educational institutions at secondary and higher secondary The amount for supply of computers and accessories was said to cover 50 percent of the total project cost

Netherlands government agreed to

supply (UPS) units, printers and software for the project. each of the recipient institutions, were to receive training on computer under the project scheduled to be imple-

parliament functional."

Werner Lensing, a lawmaker of the German opposition Christian Democratic Party, described the government and opposition versions of the political situation as conflicting, and said: "We found it difficult to under stand who is right and who is wrong. How can democracy be functional without the opposition?"

"It's not a question of early elections or elections in due time. The more important question is holding the polls rigging-free," Lensing said on Awami League's snap poll demand.

Echoing Lensing, Pflug said, "We are not in a position to make any judgement about who is responsible current state of politics in Bangladesh. But as we understand, both the BNP and Awami League bagged 40 percent votes in last elections though in the electoral process, the BNP got more seats than Awami _eague.

Bangladesh needs to diversify its export items and explore new mar-kets, as it stands among 70 focussed countries where Germany would provide more energy and technological assistance, Pflug said. He described Bangladesh as a

country of religious tolerance and an important contributor to the United Nations' peacekeeping missions worldwide. Ulrike Flach, German Liberal Party lawmaker and chairwoman of the Bundestag's education committee,

praised Bangladesh's advance in

primary education and welcomed more Bangladeshi students to Germany. Referring to the afternoon meeting with Khaleda, Flach said, "As lacking in knowledge of German language is a barrier to Bangladeshi students to go for higher education in Germany, the nrime minister assured us of exploring

the possibility of teaching German

nguage at school-level." Other parliamentary delegates were Angelika Graf, Dr Wolf Bauer and Klaus-Werner Jonas. German Ambassador to Bangladesh Dietrich Andreas, Counsellor Herman Nicolai and Press and Political Officer Muitoba Ahmed Murshed were also present at the press conference in a

Three killed

FROM PAGE 1 the last one week

On Friday night, Babu picked the three men from their hideout in Savar and brought them to Gulshan on the pretext of giving them their share.

"Babu's hit men then forced the

three men into three vehicles and later carried out the murders at the three places." an investigator said Friday quoting Zahid at the DMCH. Zahid said another robber, Badal betrayed them by collaborating with

"Babu was coordinating sale of the huge amount of gold," said Special Superintendent of Police of CID (Criminal Investigation Department)

He said a manhunt was on to arres

Babu and also took part in the murder.

Babu and others involved in the heist as well as recover the looted gold. Another source said listed crimina Masud Reza alias Mental Masud, who was gunned down Friday afternoon. was also a victim of the dispute over the spoils of the theft.

Jewellery and Mahanagar Jeweller's, taking away Tk 5.41 crore in gold and cash in one of Dhaka's biggest burglar-Police said 11 men including Zahid, Shahin, Sentu, Badal, Delwar, Babu -the ringleader, and guards of the

A gang of robbers on the night of

February 5 cleaned out Sultana

market Lutfor, Shukkur, Salam, Ziaul and Mollah Ratan were involved. Police said Babu is a construction material supplier in Mohammadpur Dhal areas but uses his business as a

cover-up for criminal activities. Police have so far recovered 3.2 kg of the gold from Bagherhat and

Hasina rules out

quorum, she said.

she claimed.

mented by March 2001.

Bangladesh parliament Johanes Pflug, MP, chairman of the parliamentary group for relations with South Asia. led the 9-member delegation to the meeting with Sheikh Hasina, who explained her party position on political situation and

parliament. The Awami League president said the parliamentary standing committees were formed without consultation and representation from the opposition parties while Sangsad sessions were being run without guorum. Even important bills were passed without

Hasina informed them of the AL government's initiatives and reforms to make parliamentary democracy She mentioned that the PM's

Question Time was introduced during

the AL's rule and MPs were made

chairmen of parliamentary standing committees instead of ministers. The AL chief said that despite "rigging in the last election." her party returned to parliament as it had fought for parliamentary democracy. But the government's gesture and the Speaker's "partisan attitude" forced them to stay away from parliament,

rigging, she said the AL got 103 seats by securing 33 percent of votes cast in 1991 election, 146 seats by securing 38 percent of votes in the 1996 election, but got 62 seats by securing 41 percent of votes in 2001 election. She alleged that in the last election, Awami League candidate was shown

Asked to elaborate on the election

securing one or two votes at many centres. "How is it possible without manipulation and rigging?" On the present political situation. Hasina alleged the government obstructs her party to conduct organiincluding MPs and workers, were severely beaten up by police during past hartals, alleged Hasina, saying that her political secretary, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, hit on his head by police, was undergoing treatment in London. The government even obstructed

Hasina also claimed that AL leaders, workers and supporters as well as minority communities, who voted for her party, were "subjected to various forms of tortures, and killing and rape by the cadres of the BNP and Jamaat' since the last election.

under the alliance rule, alleging that the "target is to eliminate Awami League. The former prime minister also

She also highlighted the signing of two significant accords -- the Chittagong Hill Tracts peace pact and the Ganges water sharing treaty with India - during the AL regime. Other members of the German

Also present were German Nicolai, AL lawmakers Kazi Zafrullah and Syed Abul Hossain, former ambassador Ziauddin and Jawadul

SI injured in clash with robbers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An encounter between police and robbers left a sub-inspector (SI) and a robber injured at Rekhamari shrimp enclosure in Dakop Saturday night.

SI Haresuddin of Dakop Police Station is undergoing treatment at Dakop Health Complex with bullet injury in his left hand and robber Alam Shaikh in the prison cell of Khulna Medical College Hospital.

The gang was preparing to commit robbery at the shrimp enclosure when police turned up and challenged at 10:00pm, police said. Police recovered three guns and

12 live cartridges and arrested the injured robber when the gang retreated after the half an hour-long

Rebels kills over 170 in Uganda

AFP, Kampala

Suspected rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army have massacred civilians at a refugee camp in northern Uganda, military and church sources

managed to confirm that 173 people were killed of which 57 had already been buried while others were still burning in their houses," Roman Catholic missionary Sebat Ayala told AFP by telephone from the northern

Saturday in Barlonyo displaced people's camp, some 20 kilometres three hours, he said.

there was a massacre in a displaced people's camp and people were burnt Fraud case

local agent

filed against

STAFF CORRESPONDENT The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) on Saturday lodged a fraud case against the local agent of saturnjobs.com for allegedly cheating people of large sum of money with

lucrative job offers abroad. Monzurul Haque, director of the BMET. filed the case with Ramna Police Station accusing Abul Hasan proprietor of Enter Solution, local agent of London-based saturnjobs.com, of swindling money from the public in the name of overseas jobs in the United Arab Emirates

was found closed yesterday with its owner absconding and a notice hung on its door that read, "We were also blackmailed like you (the public). Meanwhile, officials of Bangladesh embassy in the UAE said local police were yet to submit their report on the

The local agent's Malibagh office

London-based recruiting agency until 6:30pm Bangladesh time. We did not get it but local police told me they will submit the report within two days," Bangladesh Ambassador to the UAE Mirza

Shamsuzzaman told The Daily Star vesterday. His office would then contact foreign affairs ministry in Dhaka for

further directives, he added. A few days back, the recruiting agency allured people with coveted iob offers abroad through newspaper advertisements saying salaries would be ranging between Tk 75,000 and Tk

1,50,000 a month. Job seekers alleged the 'false' agency asked them to apply online. It also told each candidate to send £55 (Tk 6,150) to a bank in London as recruitment processing fees, but none

of the applicants got a job as yet. Sirajganj

FROM PAGE 1 refused to point fingers at anyone

might have kept the bombs in the tank Friday night during the two-hour blackout in Mymensingh town. A three-member inquiry committee has been formed to investigate the incident. Headed by the ASP, the committee started its probe yesterday.

The other members of the committee

are DI-1 Shamsul Kabir and Officer-in-

until the investigation was complete.

Police however believe criminals

Charge of Phulbaria Police Station Mohammad Affabuddin Different political and socio-cultural organisations have condemned Hasina claimed some 26,000 planting of bombs' near the Shaheed Awami League workers were killed

> "It is beyond imagination." Chairman of Phulbaria municipality and Convenor of local BNP Mujibui Rahman said. Local Awami League (AL) brought out a procession protesting the bomb-

planting incident. The president and

general secretary of district Jamaat-e-

Islami condemned the incident and

demanded exemplary punishment to

the persons involved. Meanwhile, a clash between the AL and BNP activists over paying tributes to the Language Martyrs at the Shaheed Minar left at least 25 people injured at Begumganj in Noakhali Friday night. The AL leaders and activists did not

place wreaths in protest, while their rival BNP men held a protest rally. In Meherpur, BNP cadres took control of the district Shaheed Minar

and barred AL activists from paying tributes, claimed AL activists at a press conference.

through the act that was passed in the Jatiya Sangsad before making comments. "The [bill] that was passed in parliament is much improved than the one approved by the cabinet. We

or next JS session.

sion," Moudud added.

make it more effective for speedy

settlement of the cases to be placed

before the anti-corruption commis-

He regretted that leaving aside the

main opposition Awami League and its

two lawyers, everyone hailed the

passage of the act. He suspected that

those who opposed the act did so

either without going through the law for

the sake of opposition or they do not

Without naming the lawyers

understandably Amir-ul Islam and

Rokanuddin Mahmud-- the law minis-

ter said: "I am sure they did not go

further improved it even after the

On a question, he said the commis-

sion as per the law is comprised of

cabinet approval," he added.

want corruption to be curbed.

fees, an idea opposed by many members of parliament within his

own Labour party. In an opinion poll for the Independent newspaper, published February 6, 51 percent of respondents agreed when asked if the time had

Blair's Labour government continues to enjoy a lead in the polls over the main opposition Conservatives.

released on January 28, in which the udge concentrated his criticism on the The interview focussed on domestic issues, with no mention in the News of the World about the absence of any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq -the prime reason why Blair took Britain

into the US-led war against Saddam Blair dismissed concerns about his health, recalling that when he was decide whether he would take Labour into an unprecedented third straight term in power. "I have made it clear this is a decision in the end for the British people at

the next election," he said. "They are

He brushed off suggestions that he

could exit Downing Street as early as this autumn, in time for his lawyer wife Cherie's 50th birthday. "I think the notion that you should determine this in relation to Cherie's birthday is one of the more bizarre

suggestions I have come across," said

the prime minister, who himself hit the

five-decade mark last year.

WB team

FROM PAGE 1 Bangladesh Development Forum

The BDF meeting is set to be

(RDF) meeting.

Coming out of the meeting at the planning ministry, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said. "Law and order is being undermined by certain political agendas." "[I have told them that] to mprove the law and order, the home

ministry and concerned depart-

ments have already increased their

allocations," Saifur added. "But still

law and order is not improving as

neld from May 9 to May 10.

per expectation," he noted, claimng, "the opposition party is deliberately deteriorating it." "In the name of hartal, nonpolitical individuals are being employed to undermine law and order," Saifur alleged. If this continued, the finance minister feared, the

government by itself would not be able to control the situation.

Policy and Country Services James

Cristine Wallich as the other mem-"We have discussed on the agenda of the BDF meeting. We have also reviewed the progress of

Adams and Country Director

On reforms, Patel said, "The government is on the right track," adding, the donors would evaluate and review the implementation and progress of the reform agenda of last year's BDF meeting.

order, governance and corruption as focus-sectors, which the govern-

Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday. The three-member WB team

ragis on June 30. Abomb went off Sunday near a US convoy on a road south of Fallujah, causing some injuries, according to Ismail Fakhri, a 41-year-old farmer who said he witnessed the blast. US troops blocked the road leading to the area of the attack. The US command

fire and killed one attacker and injured another, he said Sunday. Also in Mosul, an Iraqi was killed Sunday by a roadside bomb on a highway used frequently by US troops. police said. It was unclear whether the victim was planting the device when it

age or casualties. Insurgents in Fallujah, west of

FROM PAGE 1

government will soon bring necesconstitutional bodies. "We have not sary changes to the act and try to place appointed persons to the commission the amendments during the ongoing rather we have kept the provision of "We will rearrange the act and

making ex officio members from statutory bodies." Moudud said the main demand before the passage of the bill was

persons from the statutory or the

removal of political persons from the commission, which has been done. On financial independence of the commission, he said like the Supreme Court, public universities, Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat and some other bodies, the commission will tailor its

government for funds allocation which parliament will endorse. After budgetary allocation, the commission will utilise the money as per its requirement, 'so the question of financial control by the government

own budget and place it before the

does not arise', he added. On when the commission would be formed, the law minister said the commission would be formed after putting necessary infrastructure and ogistics in place. "We will try to establish the commission as early as possible and necessary gazette notification will be published [once the infrastructure is in place]."

admitted to hospital in October for an

irregular heart beat, he only took one

through illness in seven years, which is

not bad, really, and even then I was

have a moment's illness, it is translated

the World, it is up to the electorate to

working for most of it," he said.

nto a major crisis."

the ones who decide.'

"I think I have had one day off

"When you are in my position, if you

Ultimately, Blair told the News of

Blair seeks reelection

come for Blair to resign and hand over the reins of power to someone else. Despite his slump in popularity

Blair's interview with the News of

the World was his first since Lord Brian

Hutton's findings into the Kelly affair,

was led by Vice-President for Asia Pacific Region Praful C Patel and had Vice-President for Operations,

reforms," Patel told newsmen following the meeting.

Last year, the BDF meeting was held on May 17-18 in Dhaka, where the donors emphasised law and

ment committed to reform. The WB team also met Prime

formation of an alternative Iraqi gov-

able to muffle the sounds of our guns,

read the posters, which were dated

Feb. 11 and distributed by a little

known group called the Iraq Liberation

372 Rajuk staff

The 372 Rajuk employees who

were sacked yesterday received

letters of termination in the morning,

upon which they brought out pro-

cession and held demonstration on

"All the powers of evil ... won't be

Saddam gives

FROM PAGE 12 raising concerns over police readiness to face the insurgency once the Americans hand power over to the

in Baghdad had no report on the In northern Iraq, gunmen opened fire on the house of the Mosul police chief Saturday, police colonel Abdul-Azal Hazim said. The police returned

In the northern city of Kirkuk, insurgents opened fire with machine guns on the headquarters of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps on Saturday. Security officers returned fire, killing one of the attackers, said the corps regional commander. Col. Anwar Amin. Two mortar rounds landed near a British camp on the outskirts of the southern city of Basra at about 5 am Sunday, a spokesman for British troops in the area said, adding there were no immediate reports on dam-

Baghdad, posted leaflets on walls around the city overnight calling for continued resistance against the occupation and announcing the

Ioll-takers

Following Kabir's statement,

Uddin, 29.

the office premises to protest the decision, terming it as illegal. In response to the protest Minister for Housing and Public Affairs Mirza Abbas said the decision [to fire] was logical and they

would not get back their jobs. "It's

not important under what circum-

stances they were appointed. The

thing is their services are no longer

In an interview with a private

required," he said.

television channel, the minister also warned that creating any untoward situation would not be tolerated. Most of the sacked Rajuk staffers were low ranking officials and employees like security quards

directed Rajuk authority to sack them following an inquiry regarding the process of their recruitment They were appointed between 1998 and 2000 in different Rajuk projects.

still going on. But the government

assistant accounts officers, drivers survey assistants, janitors, data entry assistants, cleaners, etc. The ministry on February 18

"The projects where those employees have been working are

has terminated their jobs from police later nabbed Asraful Islam. political consideration," one top 23, Manir Ahmed, 32, and Hafiz Rajuk official alleged requesting

meeting, told newspersons.

motive for such actions

hectares of farmland in 13 upazilas of three districts -- Magura, Kushtia and

Bablu's family are embroiled in disagreement over the ransom amount: the local administration tried to rescue him on a ransom of Tk 10 lakh, but the relatives said they cannot afford more

Forest Zafrul Islam Chowdhury and Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs Moni Swapan Dewan visited the area after

Super League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium having come off three straight victories in the group stages.

Mohammad at the Fatullah Stadium. After being dumped out of the Cup competition Australia launched their

About the opposition's absence in the Jatiya Sangsad, Pflug said, "We had talks with the cabinet members, opposition leader and the prime

ng in Motijheel.

Farruk said Bangladesh could not contest in the case due to time con-

meeting aimed at resolving the issue of payment of the fine during the last four months since the verdict. The government is now in a fix on how to mobilise the fund - whether

under the grant. Tulip Computers was supposed to supply 10,388 personal computers, uninterrupted power A total of 6,768 teachers, two from

> sational activities, including meetings and processions. Party leaders,

her party from observing the International Mother Language Day programmes on February 20-22, she

accused the alliance government of corruption and terrorism.

delegation included Werner Lensing, Josef Winkler, Ulrike Flach MP, Angelika Graf, Dr Wolf Bauer and Klaus-Werner Jonas. Ambassador in Dhaka Dietrich Andreas and Counsellor Herman

said yesterday, with one missionary putting the death toll at more than 170. "I have just been there, and I have

The attack was carried out late on (12 miles) north of Lira town and lasted Said army spokesman Major Shaban Bantariza: "I can confirm that